

Message Text

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20

ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-10 RSC-01 ADP-00

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 RSR-01 OMB-01 EB-11 COME-00

TRSE-00 /168 W

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R 300230Z AUG 73

FM AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1586

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L CANBERRA 4803

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UN, RQ, AS

SUBJ: AUSTRALIAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO RES IN UN

COMMITTEE OF 24

REF: STATE 171722

1. EMBASSY LEFT AIDE MEMOIRE WITH DFA (KELSO, ASST. SECY, UN BRANCH) AUG 24, EMBODYING SELECTION OF THE EXCELLENT MATERIAL RECEIVED FROM DEPT AND USUN. HE PROMISED CAREFUL STUDY OF OUR ARGUMENTS.

2. AUG 30 KELSO REVIEWED GOA POSITION, AS CONTAINED IN INSTRUCTIONS TO AUSTRALIAN UN DELEGATION. HE SAID ISSUE WAS ONE OF MOST AWKWARD AUSTRALIA HAS FACED SINCE COMING ON SECURITY COUNCIL IN 1972. ON ONE HAND DFA AND PRIME MINISTER WHITLAM CLEARLY APPRECIATE VERY SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS PUERTO RICO HAS MADE IN POLITICAL, ECONOMIC, AND SOCIAL AREAS. MOREOVER, AUSTRALIA HAS LIVELY APPRECIATION OF SENSITIVITY OF U.S. ON ISSUE AND WANTS TO MAINTAIN CLOSE RELATIONS WITH U.S. AUSTRALIAN DELEGATION NEW YORK HAS BEEN INFORMED OF EMBASSY'S AIDE MEMOIRE AND OTHER APPROACHES. ON OTHER HAND WHITLAM CLEARLY STANDS
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FOR PRINCIPLE OF DECOLONIALIZATION AND IS MOST UNWILLING

TO WAFFLE OR COMPROMISE ON IT. MOREOVER, AUSTRALIA IS PREPARED TO HAVE SIMILAR ATTENTION DIRECTED TO NON SELF-GOVERNING AUSTRALIAN TERRITORIES, SUCH AS COCOS-KEELING AND CHRISTMAS ISLANDS, WHICH HAVE BEEN TARGETS OF COMMITTEE OF 24 BUT WHICH FOR PRACTICAL REASONS CAN NEVER BE INDEPENDENT.

3. KELSO SAID THAT RESOLUTION AS INTRODUCED, INCLUDING OPERATIVE PARA WHICH IS PARTICULARLY OBJECTIONABLE TO U.S. IS NOT RPT NOT TOO BAD IN ITSELF. LANGUAGE IS ESSENTIALLY ANODYNE, AS AUSTRALIAN VIEW IT, SINCE U.S. COULD CONVINCINGLY ARGUE THAT IT IS DOING NOTHING TO OBSTRUCT FULL AND FREE EXERCISE BY PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO OF RIGHT TO SELF-DETERMINATION, ETC., AND THAT, IN FACT, U.S. IS DOING EVERYTHING IT CAN TO RESPECT THIS RIGHT. KELSO SAID HE KNOWS NEW YORK ATMOSPHERE AND APPRECIATES THAT SUPPORTERS OF RES ARE TRYING TO GIVE IT AS ANTI-AMERICAN A TWIST AS POSSIBLE AND WILL SEEK TO PORTRAY ITS PASSAGE AS DENUNCIATION OF U.S. POLICY BY UN BODY, TO INTENSE ANNOYANCE AND EMBARRASSMENT OF U.S. PRESS WOULD NO DOUBT PORTRAY PASSAGE OF RES IN SAME LIGHT.

4. KELSO SAID THAT, LEAVING ASIDE ATMOSPHERE AT UN, AUSTRALIA COULD VOTE FOR RES BUT INSTRUCTION TO UN DELEGATION AUTHORIZES THEM TO CONSIDER ABSTAINING, PROVIDING A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF MEMBERS OF COMMITTEE ALSO ABSTAIN, PARTICULARLY CARIBBEAN COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES AND AUSTRALIA'S SOUTHEAST ASIAN NEIGHBORS. DELEGATION IS INSTRUCTED TO DO ALL IT CAN TO GET MODIFIED AND LESS TENDENTIOUS TEXT.
GREEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 AUG 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: smithrj
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973CANBER04803
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS GREEN
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: CANBERRA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t1973086/aaaaaehv.tel
Line Count: 93
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION IO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: STATE 171722
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: smithrj
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: WITHDRAWN <25-Oct-2001 by eisnerah, 3.4.X6>; RELEASED <12-Dec-2001 by smithrj>; APPROVED <13-Dec-2001 by smithrj>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: AUSTRALIAN POSITION ON PUERTO RICO RES IN UN COMMITTEE OF 24
TAGS: AORG, AS, UN
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005